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No. 4

SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC LIBRARIES *

by

S. B. ASHER

IN his Presidential Address on Education to this section, at our first joint meeting with the British Association 36 years ago, the late Sir Richard Jebb forecast the paramount importance to the future of South Africa of the educational requirements of the three great professions, the profession of Engineering in all its branches, the profession of Agriculture and the profession of Education itself upon which progress in every branch of knowledge so largely depends.

Since that time, the introduction of many industries into South Africa and their continuous mechanization ; the progressive industrialization of the country which present conditions and public policy are now intensifying ; the gradual obsolescence of traditional husbandry and the advent of scientific agriculture, together with the development of a psychological propaganda appealing to vestigial instincts, are not only leading to a reconsideration of the purpose and practice of both liberal and vocational education, but have made the provision of the means and aids for non-academical adult self-education a necessity for the attainment and preservation of essential economic, civic and ethical ends.

This Association has also in the past organized two very important symposia on the natural and on the human resources of South Africa respectively, but we still await a discussion on the most important resource of all, the key to all other resources, namely the knowledge which will provide our human resources with the power of utilizing the materials and forces in their environment for the satisfaction of supreme human needs.

I have therefore selected for discussion the present South African Public Libraries, so far as they concern the European population, because it is at this time important to consider whether they can serve as, or be converted into, efficient agencies for supplying the vocational knowledge required by industrialized masses to utilize their resources and fit them for imminent changes in their economic environment, and also for supplying the civic and ethical knowledge requisite for maintaining the stability of the nation and its human status, or whether they neither are nor can be adapted to implement these ends efficiently.

SUBSCRIPTION LIBRARIES

There are three classes of public libraries in the Union, viz. :—

- (a) 241 Subscription Libraries
- (b) 11 Municipal Free Libraries
- (c) 2 National Libraries

* Presidential Address to Section F of the South African Association for the Advancement of Science, read 1. July 1941. Reprinted from *The South African journal of science*, v. 38 : 112-32 1941, by kind permission of The Council.

A few months ago the attention of the Minister of the Interior was drawn to the condition of the South African Libraries. It was stated in the Union Senate that an inter-departmental committee appointed in 1936 had reported that the present library position was highly unsatisfactory, and that in 1933 the librarian of the State Library in Pretoria had reported that of the 1,780,000 volumes contained in the public libraries, at least 1,000,000 were superfluous. No mention appears, however, to have been made of a more radical condemnation of these libraries by the latter authority two years later in a statement to an adult education conference in Durban, to the effect "That the average South African library might be described as a mere subsidized book club run on sweated labour for the circulation of ephemeral fiction", and that "the real function of a library as our most important educational institution remained unrealized and unfulfilled".

A motion in the Senate that "The attention of the Government be drawn to the recommendations of the inter-departmental committee on the libraries of the Union with a view to the development of a national library policy and the organization of nation-wide library facilities", was welcomed by the Minister, who hoped that something might happen as a result of a fact-finding committee which the Government had appointed, and added the significant statement that "the Library was the poor man's University, a Library properly conducted and properly stocked".

This principle, having regard to the progressively vocational character of city universities, offers a standpoint from which the purpose of public libraries and their degree of achievement can be surveyed. In South Africa it would also form the justification for the control and support of the libraries—in an even greater measure than the Technical Schools—being vested in the Union Department of Education.

It would be useless to enter upon any consideration of South African Public Libraries without, in the first place, attempting to dissipate the confusion existing in the minds of the public and of some of the authorities mentioned, between those completely distinct institutions, the Municipal Public Free Libraries founded in Great Britain in 1850 *expressly* for national educational purposes, to which the term University was applied by Carlyle, and the circulating libraries for subscribers, introduced about a century earlier with very different objectives, the only distinction of the latter being that conferred upon them by Sheridan in the hackneyed saying that "A circulating library in a town is as an evergreen tree of diabolical knowledge".

The latter institutions are not mentioned in British Government reports, their work is not referred to in British official statistics, they are not regarded as in any way related to the national library system, nor do they in Britain demand or receive any financial assistance from the State.

The history of South African public libraries begins with the foundation of the first public library in the country by Lord Charles Somerset in 1818, long before the existence of parliamentary institutions in South Africa, before the recognition by the government of any responsibility for national education, and before even the foundation of any system of national primary schools. The objective of the library was declared by the founder to be :—

"To lay the foundation of a system which shall place the means of *knowledge* within the reach of the youth of this remote corner of the globe."

Clearly a national educational institution was contemplated, and provision was accordingly made for the entire cost to be borne by the taxpayer. The proposed system

was, however, never developed, and even the foundation was destroyed seven years later, on Somerset's retirement, when the funds provided for the library were devoted to other objects by an unappreciative official, the library being granted a small subsidy for a couple of years, and further state-aid discontinued.

The library was then abandoned to a committee which assumed full control, retained the name of the institution, and in order to obtain the necessary funds for its maintenance converted it into a subscribers' circulating library of the usual Eighteenth Century English type, an institution at that time common in Great Britain and popular with the leisured classes. During the 30 years which elapsed before a parliamentary government under Sir George Grey resumed its interest in the Cape Town library, a number of new libraries modelled on that subscription library came into existence in the larger towns of the Cape Colony, all of which adopted the same policy and practice, even assuming the title of public libraries.

The result of the reversion of Somerset's educational foundation to the eighteenth century model of circulating libraries was that when the echoes of the British agitation for free educational libraries and of the 1850 Act reached South Africa, a system of self-styled public libraries readily accessible to the leisured classes and providing them with a desired and partly gratuitous amenity, was already in existence; the impression prevailed and still prevails in some quarters, that the objectives of the British rate-supported libraries and of our local institutions were identical, so that natural conservatism and the self-confidence of vested interests made any change appear superfluous.

The lack of identical objectives will, however, appear from the following opinions on the local subscription libraries expressed by the Carnegie Commissioners who reported on them in 1929.

In an article by one of these Commissioners published in the (British) Library Association Record in March, 1929, the following is included :—

"There are 211 institutions, styled 'Public Libraries', in the towns and villages of the Union, over 200 of which lend books for home reading to subscribers only. With few exceptions, they owe their existence to the absence and unpayability of commercial circulating libraries in this country, and they are in fact proprietary subscription libraries. They differ from their commercial congeners in not being conducted for financial gain, and in drawing, in theory, half of their expenditure from the Government and the Municipalities . . . 200 of the smaller libraries return an average circulation of 9,000 volumes per annum, of which only 8% is regarded as educational, whilst among eleven outstanding institutions such figures as 'nil', 2.3%, 2.4% and 3.2% of the circulation are found as representing the issues of Educational Value."

"The acceptance of a Government grant of funds entails upon these libraries the obligation of permitting non-subscribers to read the books and periodicals in the library premises. The prominence, however, given to the subscription qualification for membership, the general ignorance of a legal right to the use of the libraries, the scanty or non-existent accommodation provided for the public, and above all the general feeling that non-subscribers are intruders and recipients of a benefaction from a semi-private body, combine to deprive this right of any practical value in all but the largest libraries."

It might perhaps have been explained that there was no legal obligation to provide accommodation for non-subscribers.

The other Carnegie Commissioner to South Africa writes as follows in his report to the Carnegie Corporation (page 9) :—

“South Africa, you are told, is a land of sunshine, an outdoor country, a place where games and sports hold the attention and where reading *is a recreation and nothing more*. As a result of this condition . . . fiction alone is in demand, and of fiction only the latest, the best sellers, the thrillers, will go. Some committee men on the book-selection group will tell you of their ambition to buy the more substantial and enduring works ; but they point out the precarious position they occupy ; love for the good, on the one hand, and on the other, subscribers who, if they do not get their stories, will complain, lose interest or even withhold the fee which makes the whole thing possible.”

As regards the attitude of the provincial authorities, it is interesting to learn that although the regulations under which public funds were granted to libraries in the Cape Colony on the £ for £ principle dated from 1874, the public was only informed by a Cape Administrator's circular in 1921 that “It has been found that libraries have spent the Government grant almost wholly on fiction . . . and have neglected the building up of a collection of representative works of a more solid nature . . .”.

A Regulation thereafter laid down that at least three-fourths of the Cape Provincial Government grant should be spent on books, and that as from 1. January, 1922, one-fourth of this book fund should be spent on works of an educative and non-ephemeral nature. This provision made an expenditure on non-fiction of 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. of the provincial government grant obligatory, and as that grant at that time amounted to 22 per cent. of the total income of the libraries, a sum equal to about *four per cent.* of that income was to be spent on works of an educative and non-ephemeral nature. Although the observance of this obligation was not verified, the presence of the regulation in the provincial code was apparently regarded by the authorities as sufficient to entitle the libraries to rank as Educational Agencies and to participate in the proceeds of public taxation.

SUBSCRIPTION LIBRARIES : WORK AND COST

The essential statistical data required for a consideration of the subscription libraries are : (1) an analysis of the character of their work as shown by the proportions of different classes of books circulated, (2) the proportion of subscribers to the local population, and (3) the respective financial contributions to the cost of the work made by the subscribers and by the general public through National, Provincial and Local Governments. The supply of this information to the authorities and to the general public would seem to be the *raison d'être* of official library statistics and to be an indispensable preliminary to assigning public funds for the support of the libraries. I have summarized the figures available in the Official Year Book of the Union published by the Department of Census and Statistics and have drawn attention to their probable value and to necessary adjustments.

TABLE I. CHARACTER OF CIRCULATION

Dates	Number of Libraries	Circulation		
		Fiction	Technical and Educational	Other
1913 to 1917	154 to 218	79.91%	—	20.09%
1918 to 1933 except 1930	211 to 245	78.22%	12.46%	9.32%
1934 ¹	246	79.1%	9.8%	11.1%
1934	249	74%	14.7%	10.5%
1935 to 1940	253 to 254	No classified data published		

The above table does not fully represent the recreational character of the subscription libraries, the heading "Fiction" applying only to English novels, fiction in other languages and juvenile stories being generally classed, during the periods shown, under another heading. Further, the inclusion of national and municipal libraries, with great reference collections, in the totals for the subscription libraries is misleading; in 1934 for example, the last year for which classified data were given, the inclusion of the figures for the two national libraries and the Johannesburg library increases the average percentage of alleged technical and educational issues of the 246 subscription libraries by fifty per cent.

In the absence of instructions from the Department of Census as to the books to be included under the heading "Technical and Educational", and in view of the staff of many subscription libraries consisting of part-time and voluntary workers, the figures under that heading can only be regarded as an approximation. Since 1935 the Census Department, at the instance of the Association which represents the subscription libraries, has ceased to require that books issued by the libraries should be classified in their returns according to their character, a distinction being made only between books issued to adults and to juveniles. The reason for this departure may possibly lie in the doubtful accuracy of the classified results previously obtained, but this neither justifies the suppression of the figures for fiction issues which everyone can recognize nor the lack of proper instructions for an approximate classification. The present practice results in preventing any estimate *at all* of the educational value of the current library circulation being available to the public.

The number of subscribers to libraries individually being only given officially in respect to a list of 11 or 12 important urban institutions, collective figures being given in addition for each province, it was necessary in order to obtain an approximate figure for the percentage of the population subscribing to local libraries, to take the number of members of subscription libraries with few or no free readers from the above-mentioned list for 1936, when it could be compared with the census results for the local population in that year.

¹ The two National Libraries and the Johannesburg Municipal Library are omitted from the figures in this line which are calculated from the figures in the Year Book.

The figures showed that urban populations numbering 354,656 provided 10,741 subscribers, an average of 3.03%.

The proportion of the Revenue of the subscription libraries contributed by the subscribers to the above group of libraries is not disclosed in the Official Year Book, the items given being the total of the Union and Provincial Government grants, and an omnibus figure designated "Other" including Local Government Grants, Subscriptions and sundry revenue. The undermentioned figures for the Local Government Grants and Subscriptions have been obtained from the Municipal Year Book.

REVENUE OF PROMINENT URBAN SUBSCRIPTION LIBRARIES

OFFICIAL YEAR BOOK		MUNICIPAL YEAR BOOK	
Total Revenue	£29,514	(£29,514)	
Union & Provincial Government Grants	£4,385 = 14.85%	£4,396 = 14.9%	} 52.42%
Local Government Grants	—	£11,075 = 37.52%	
Subscriptions	—	£11,447 = 38.8%	
Other	£25,192 = 85.15%	(£2,596 = 8.78%)	

The omission of the Local Government Grants from the official total of Government grants has made it appear that under 15 per cent.² of the revenue of these subscription libraries was obtained from public funds, whereas, in the instances given, 52.42 per cent. of the revenue was supplied by the public for the benefit of 3.03 per cent. of the local population. The combination of Local Government grants with subscriptions and sundries, dates, however, from the earliest issues of the Official Year Book, and it is hoped that the recognition of the misunderstanding to which it gives rise may lead to a reconsideration of the practice. The other main purpose of the publication of official statistics of libraries would also be implemented if a significant and verified account of the character of the work of the subscription libraries were disclosed to the public.

It is regrettable that the authorities who are guided by the statistics given in the Official Year Book could not be permitted to realize that 50 per cent. of the cost of 240 subscription libraries was provided by the payers of taxes and rates for the supply of the mainly recreational requirements of three or four per cent. of the population, as the relevant funds might have been diverted to definitely educational ends.

During the last twelve years there has been a continuous effort to prevail upon the owners of subscription libraries to surrender their property to public authorities for the free use of the public and to induce these authorities to provide the necessary funds, but success has only been achieved in a few exceptional cases. On the Rand Goldfields some wealthy municipalities have followed the example of Johannesburg and provided all their citizens with free libraries, of the same recreational type as the subscription libraries, but outside the Rand only three of the 246 libraries in the Union have become free to the public. The reasons for this failure are:—

² Note: Official Year Book No. 17, neglecting Local Government contributions, shows the average Government grant over the 10 years 1925-34 to 215-249 libraries as barely 17.0 per cent. of their total receipts, whilst the Year Book for 1940 gives an average grant of 17.6% for the 5 years 1934-38 in respect to 249-254 libraries.

(1) That nearly all subscription libraries are privately owned and controlled by social groups who do not desire any public interference with their control, with their choice of amenities, or with a membership qualified by the payment of a subscription. At present, subscription libraries are entirely autonomous, unless they accept a provincial grant, and in that case public control is strictly limited to two or three points defined by regulation and not often enforced.

(2) That most subscription libraries are not dependent upon the provincial grants for their existence. In Natal only two such grants are made, no grants at all are made by the Orange Free State, and most libraries in the Transvaal survived the period 1923 to 1926 during which they received no provincial grant.

(3) That public authorities are reluctant to become responsible for free libraries probably owing to the feeling that they would in general only be distinguishable from the subscription libraries by their greater membership; that their educational achievement is insignificant, and that they mainly provide a form of entertainment which has no greater claim upon the taxpayer than more popular diversions, and far less than any municipal utilities.

MUNICIPAL FREE LIBRARIES

The establishment of rate-supported Municipal Free Libraries was first authorized in Great Britain in 1850, as a result of many years' agitation by Ewart & Brotherton for the provision of free educational libraries for the nation. This agitation culminated in the appointment in 1849 by the British Government of a Select Committee to report on the subject and ultimately in the adoption by Parliament of the 1850 Library Act. The report of the Select Committee clearly indicated the objective of the libraries recommended, viz. :—

"A free public library ought, above all things, to teach the teachers, to supply with the best instruments of education those who educate the people, whether in the pulpit, the schools or the press."

The title of "The People's University" has been applied to public free libraries of this character and was derived from Carlyle's dictum that "the true University of these days is a collection of books", an opinion which he amplified by saying that "After all manner of professors have done their best for us, the place we are to get knowledge is in books". This conception of a public free library, as a super-university, providing the fullest information on *all* subjects, offering communion not merely with instructors and colleagues but with the greatest minds, regarding other educational institutions as propaedeutic, providing the foundations, methods and tools for a life-long study of books, can obviously only be fully realized in great national institutions, but it may form the ideal and the goal of every part of a national library system.

The essential character of the Municipal Public Free Library as an educational institution has been constantly upheld and emphasized by the British authorities in spite of Municipal panderings to a sectional craving for the substitution of recreation for education.

In 1917 at the 40th annual meeting of the British Library Association, the following resolution was adopted :—

"The aim of the library as an educational institution is best expressed in the formula

'self-development in an atmosphere of freedom', as contrasted with the aim of the school which is 'training in an atmosphere of discipline'. In the school the teacher is dominant, but the pupil strikes out his own line in the library which supplies the written material upon which the powers awakened and trained in the school can be exercised."

In 1919 the British Government commissioned a committee known as the "Master of Balliol's" committee, to report on adult education. In their third interim report, the committee say :—

"The library is part of the educational fabric just as the Art Room or the School Clinic."

"The unsystematic and recreative reading which the libraries have stimulated do not, however, it seems to us, provide any argument for maintaining the public libraries as an independent public service."

"It is with no desire to subordinate the libraries or belittle their importance that we recommend the union of educational and library administration. We think that the local educational authority should be the authority responsible for the administration of public libraries and public museums, in order to ensure the closest relationship between the activities of schools, libraries and museums. *In England and Wales the local authorities for Higher Education should be the authorities for libraries and museums.*"

In their final report, the Committee state :—

"We made a survey of existing libraries and we gave reasons for supporting the proposal to transfer the administration of public libraries to the local educational authority and we recommend the union of educational and library administration."

The latest British Committee on libraries state in their report (1927 and 1935) that :—

"The public free library is recognized . . . as the essential foundation for the progress in education and culture without which no people can hold its own in the struggle for existence."

The system of Municipal Public Free Libraries which also exists in Canada, was the object of investigation by a Carnegie Commission in 1930 to 1933, and in their report the Commissioners state :—

"The essential qualifications for a good Library Act should provide for :—

- (1) *A definite statement of the purpose of a public library, basing its claim for public recognition and financial support on the same grounds of service as other educational institutions such as Schools and Colleges.*
- (2) A central supervising and energizing agency.
- (3) Representative and responsible management.
- (4) A sure and adequate income."

"Throughout eight of the provinces" (of Canada) "public libraries have been abandoned by the government to the municipalities. For city and town libraries no supervision is exercised, no standards of service set . . . This condition can easily be remedied. *It can be done by the legislative assertion of the principle that the public library is part of the education system . . .*"

"If it is recognized that no one can be educated without books, it inevitably follows that a government should put libraries in the same class with schools, making both compulsory. This contention rests on the basis that modern thought

realizes that education of all the people is necessary to the preservation and the permanence of a democratic form of government."

In the United States of America where so many state-supported free libraries owe their existence to Carnegie benefactions—themselves inspired by educational zeal—there are, in addition to some outstanding institutions of national importance and value, a great majority of libraries where the authorities, municipal or provincial, share the sectional choice of free entertainment in preference to essential educational service. To these the following account still applies ³.

"In America, the ideal seems to be to obtain the most popular books, those that will circulate best, and many an up-to-date committee will buy no book, keep no book, that is not a good circulator. More often than not the American library is a club for the reading of new books—frequently only of new novels."

A questionable artifice which may not be unknown outside America, but which appeals with equal success to the public purse and to the vulgar admiration for big figures, is also pilloried by the same author ⁴ who writes :—

"In one State of America, where the amount of Government grant is based on the issue, the result has been to excite a feverish desire to increase the issue, alike by Library Boards and staffs, and while the Library Boards would only buy such books as were good 'circulators', without consideration whether such books were of real value to the community, the library staff insisted on every unfortunate user of the library taking out, each time he or she visited it, two books, one of which might not be fiction—despite reluctance of protest—and all because of the statistics."

That these ideals still persist and are recognized as a *corruptio optimi*, appears from the following statement on American libraries made by the chief librarian of the great Carnegie Foundation at Pittsburg, delivered at the Annual Conference of the American Library Association in 1937, viz :—

"Our first aim is to make certain that our libraries do fall within the definition of an Educational Agency. Libraries which . . . buy several hundred new fiction titles each year and maintain expensive services to carry on a large circulation of novels, are *backsliders*, and should be represented on the mourning bench."

In his Presidential Address to the American Library Association in 1938, Mr. Harrison Craver stated : "In its value as an instrument of Education resides the chief argument for a Public Library. Valuable as it may be as a means of public recreation, no one of us would be content to argue for its continuance on that ground alone."

"If Libraries are to live, their final appeal will have to be based upon some more substantial contribution to society than the providing of recreation. Unfortunately in the minds of many people to-day that is their chief function. Equally unfortunate this impression is uncomfortably close to the truth in some cases. *The coming generation of librarians must face the task of converting libraries into something different—and more worth while.*"

A Statement of Policy adopted by the Council, of the American Library Association on the 25. December, 1940,⁵ reads as follows :—

³ DYER, B. L. ; The Public Library Systems of Great Britain, America and South Africa. This Journal, 1, 426, (1903)

⁴ DYER, B. L. ; *Ibidem*, 421.

⁵ American Library Association ; A statement of policy. *Library Journal*, 66, Pt. 2. p. 65 (15. 1. 41).

"The American Library Association declares that Libraries must help the unskilled, unemployed man preparing himself to hold a job in an essential industry; the skilled worker preparing himself for greater responsibility; the engineer re-educating himself for defense activities; the designers of airplanes, motors, tanks, guns and ships; the research workers in science and industry; the farm worker who must adjust himself to new economic conditions . . ." "The Library cannot work alone, but must co-operate with all other agencies concerned with research, education, training and the diffusion of ideas." "The diffusion of knowledge and understanding was never more important to the welfare of mankind."

The statements quoted will leave little doubt that the primary and fundamental functions and objectives of the Municipal Public Free Libraries, with which our subscription libraries are so often confused, are educational, and that their implied deterioration and failure to implement the functions of educational institutions is due to the control being entrusted to municipal bodies which are incompetent to act as independent educational authorities.

SOUTH AFRICAN MUNICIPAL FREE LIBRARIES

Since the municipalization of the Johannesburg Public Library in 1924, eight subscription libraries on the Rand and three such libraries in other parts of the Union have become Municipal and Free. It has been a great disappointment to many advocates of these libraries that the character of the literature circulated has not, however, been affected materially by the change of control and remains that of the preceding subscription library.⁶ This result supports the views of the Master of Balliol's Committee and of the Carnegie Canadian Commission, as regards the educational inadequacy of municipal control and the necessity of library control being exercised by a National Department of Education.

The attitude of some enlightened municipal library committees may be illustrated by the following quotation from an annual report to such a committee, by a librarian whose issue of fiction (excluding Afrikaans, foreign and juvenile stories) had unfortunately fallen in a particular year from 77 per cent. to 75 per cent. of the total issue.

"It is distressing"—writes the librarian—"to have to report a large decrease in the number of books of fiction issued. This is undoubtedly due to the competition of the numerous 'tickey' libraries which have sprung up all over town and which cater for the light reading of so many of our citizens. *The only way to regain lost ground* will be by the establishment of a library service in the suburbs."

Needless to say, the suburban service called for was before long provided.

Under present conditions, it has become evident that with few exceptions, the Municipal Free Libraries formed by the conversion of subscription libraries, so far from serving to supply the educational and informational needs of the local population, exceed both the subscription and the tickey library in the provision of recreational attrac-

⁶ Note: Graham's Law, as applied to amusement ousting Education, is illustrated in an account of a municipal travelling library in the *Star* of 13. 1. 1942:—"The demand is almost *exclusively* for popular fiction . . . As at the Public Library three tickets *two for fiction*, and one for non-fiction are allowed. Very few people make use of their non-fiction ticket, and scores ask . . . to take a novel out on it."

tions to a wider circle of readers at the public expense, thereby enlisting a larger measure of popular support for their continuance. It must therefore be held that the existence of most of the converted libraries is at present among the greatest hindrances to the establishment of the most important agency for adult education which a nation can have. Inasmuch, however, as the local government finance upon which the free library entirely depends can be subjected to national control, their policy and practice could be radically revised and the necessary changes safeguarded by a rigorous educational control.

SCHOOL LIBRARIES

School Libraries are everywhere recognized as an essential part of an educational system, and their aims, uses, equipment and operation are fully dealt with in the relevant literature. In this country there are over 4,000 schools, most of which own collections of books often regarded as libraries. Owing, however, to traditional economies and to a local lag in educational development, a mere fraction of the four thousand possess libraries equipped with the necessary material and operated so as to implement their real aims. The provision of books is too often dependent upon parental contributions and the library service generally devolves upon a fully occupied staff, with the result that a haphazard delivery of books from a casual collection is made at varied intervals to unguided children.

The essential condition for the formation of a School Library is that the selection of books should be made by the best available talent acting upon the supreme principle that all books should be the best and latest on their subject. The second best should on no account be admitted, and no matter how popular a book may be, it should be banned if it contains inaccuracies. *The child must be given nothing to unlearn.* What matters is not how many but how good are the books available. The recognized aims of a School Library are :—

(1) To provide the material affording the best assistance for the routine work of the school, both to pupils and teachers. The latter should have access to the literature which would enable them to arouse and stimulate the interest of the pupils in the subjects taught.

(2) To afford the pupils opportunities for the formation and growth of individual interests and pursuits outside the ordinary routine work. The presence in the library of the best popular works on all branches of Science, Art and Industry, History, Biography and Literature is therefore essential.

(3) To supply the pupils with sources of information on current topics of the day and to assist them in the acquisition of general knowledge.

(4) To encourage voluntary work by pupils in finding things out for themselves.

(5) To foster a love of reading.

(6) To provide for the juniors, school stories and stories of adventure, exploration and heroism, which, when selected with sufficient care, offer many admirable models of uprightness, loyalty, generosity, enterprise and courage, and present standards of conduct, values and ideals of the good citizen to the impressionable mind of the young. Few, if any, primary schools and only a small proportion of the high schools in the Union either possess or are in a position to provide the three essentials of a school library, namely a meticulous and adequate selection of books, together with permanent accommodation

and competent guidance for readers ; and the primary aims of the school library cannot therefore generally be considered. The letterpress sometimes offered to schools by circulating libraries and other non-educational bodies not being purposive, requires the strictest scrutiny before admission into a school library as it may contain much second-rate, time-consuming and even formatively harmful material.

The only promising method of ensuring general compliance with the essential condition of the formation of a school library and of advancing its aims would be for the educational authorities to form a national basic collection of the best books on the subjects taught in the schools and on the subjects previously mentioned, to provide a set of this collection for every school, and to supplement it annually by new additions and replacements. For the efficient discharge of the national responsibility it would further be necessary to provide accommodation in school premises for children not engaged in class work who may wish to consult the books, and to make competent guidance available whenever required.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the basic school library collection, upon which the greater part of the general knowledge of school children, and in many cases the whole of their civic and ethical principles, will depend, should differ widely from the children's books found in the miscellaneous stock of circulating libraries and in the representative collections of the greater municipal libraries, inasmuch as its contents must be individually selective and purposive, free from error and the best of their kind.

RURAL LIBRARY SERVICES

An Urban Area is defined as "an area included within any city, borough, municipality, village management, health committee, township or other local board constituted under any law and possessing some form of Urban Local Authority".

So far as the European population is concerned a "Rural Library Service" is therefore a Farm Service, including libraries in farm schools, where no form of Urban Local Authority exists, since all dorps, villages, hamlets, etc., are urban. The statistics given in recent Official Year Books of a Rural Free Library Service financed by the Transvaal Provincial Government, elsewhere stated to consist of about 200 stations in dorp and village schools, possibly including a few farm schools, and in Agricultural Union branches, suggest but do not represent the existence of a farm service. The statistical record of library borrowers in the Union under the ambiguous terms "Town" and "Country" has the same effect.

Actually the so-called "Rural" service consists at present of the delivery of boxes of books several times a year to 176 dorp schools and to 24 Agricultural Union centres mainly situated in dorps. In addition to the usual literature, a proportion of children's books is included in the school consignments. The service to the resident urban population, which is conducted gratuitously by the schoolmasters, is limited by the school requirements and is suspended on school holidays and week-ends. Farmers in the immediate neighbourhood of the stations are able to borrow books from the schools, but as their visits are generally made on Saturdays when the schools are closed, this facility is greatly restricted. As regards the supply of children's books, the disadvantages of using such material from circulating and general libraries for the formation of school libraries have already been mentioned.

In the Cape Province, it appears that the Society for Book Distribution has established 43 "Rural Library Centres" in conjunction with schools, Die Helpmekaar, A.C.V.V., the Agricultural Union (Women's Section), Excelsior and various Leeskringe. Most if not all these centres appear to be situated in urban areas. No statistics are available of the character of the issues to adults from the Transvaal and Cape school stations, but there is no reason to believe that it differs to any extent from that of other small urban circulating libraries.

The provision of government subsidies to private bodies for the free distribution of books to the public, in lieu of such work being conducted by a National Department of Education, not only disregards the fact that the interest of the State in libraries and library substitutes should be entirely confined to their educational work, which under present control forms a negligible fraction of their activity, but also that such financial support offers facilities for the dissemination of detrimental and subversive propaganda at the public expense. The full and valuable educational and agricultural library service already provided by the Union Government to farms and country schools freely or at a trifling cost from the libraries of the Union Agricultural Department and of the National Bureau of Educational and Social Research could serve the entire educational needs of the Transvaal farm population by comparatively small additions to those libraries, whilst industrial literature could be supplied from a specific regional industrial collection in Pretoria. Village schools with their many disabilities are unfitted for a farm service and the supply of wanted books from State collections were best entrusted to the Police Depots. There seems no reason for the maintenance of an alleged "Rural" service, supplying the residents of a number of small dorps and a small percentage of neighbouring farmers with a gratuitous circulating library service at the taxpayer's expense. The educational facilities afforded by the Union libraries are perhaps insufficiently known and should be brought to the notice of every farmer and every farm school.

THE FUTURE

The object of this brief survey of South African libraries has been to draw attention to the national duty of supplying adult industrialized masses with the means of acquiring the knowledge requisite for the planned economic basis of the South African nation, and for its civic and ethical superstructure. In the schools vocational education and training still forms an unimportant part of the courses, and in deference to a petty and outworn economy, the young have been left without the reinforcement and complement to their education obtainable from properly stocked, staffed and organized school libraries; and in many cases a time-consuming and educationally ineffective if not harmful substitute has been allowed to develop.

The vast majority of adults and adolescents, to whom, outside their occupations, books are the main sources of knowledge, have a nominal right to consult some hundreds of circulating libraries owned, stocked and conducted by subscribers to provide, co-operatively and in part at the public expense, the latest of fiction and other literary antidotes against boredom and depression. It may be confidently asserted that there are not a dozen public libraries in the Union with a collection of books on applied science and art, industries and manufactures, which it would be worth while for our future industrialized masses to consult, and that there is not a single public library in the country with a full range of up-to-date books on every branch of these subjects.

On the social, civic and ethical subjects, a number of miscellaneous volumes representing a variety of theories, and of different degrees of authority and value, would be found in most libraries, but there are few if any public libraries which possess systematic collections of the most important works on these subjects.

What of the future? If it is recognized that South Africa is "on the threshold of vast industrial expansion involving the transformation of a large percentage of the population into industrial operatives", adequate institutional and private facilities should be provided for that transformation to be successful. The minimum facilities can at present be visualized as a large measure of vocational training in the schools, the formation of normal school libraries, and free and ready access and *expert guidance* to up-to-date collections of the fullest and best industrial and educational literature.

In order to achieve success in a great national enterprise, unity of action is indispensable, and the educational provision for our imminent industrial revolution should therefore become the duty of a single educational authority, appointed *ad hoc* and implementing uniformly a clearly defined national policy, a prerequisite to which is acknowledged to be the supply of the fullest information on all industries.

As over ten million pounds are already spent annually on European education, it would be necessary, in order to render a large extension economically possible, to confine the new policy in the first instance to the supply of hitherto unobtainable essential literature to the essential industrial centres, where the books would be immediately available to a majority of the working population, and whence they could be sent to enquirers in the district.

The establishment of a number of fully stocked central regional libraries in the Union, in lieu of one central institution, is indispensable for industrial purposes, in spite of the additional cost, as time is an important element in industry and it often happens that the information needed by the engineer, industrial worker or manufacturer loses its value if it is not immediately available. Whilst the investigator or long-range research worker may benefit from the widespread enquiries of a central library for students, industrial questions may require an immediate reply which can only be given by a technically qualified librarian in a fully equipped special library.

The majority of the South African manufacturing industries are established in five municipal areas or in their vicinity, namely Cape Town, Pretoria, Johannesburg, Durban and Port Elizabeth, where communications, power and water supplies are now well developed and labour is readily obtainable. As all new industries will require the same facilities, it is reasonable to assume that these centres will remain the chief seats of industry in the Union. The population of these five centres was found in the 1936 census to be 654,500 or just over 50 per cent. of the urban population of the Union, and an increase of this percentage will probably be shown in this year's census. In view of the concentration of industries in these areas and in their vicinity, in all probability 75 to 80 per cent. or more of the total demand for industrial knowledge could be adequately dealt with by properly equipped libraries in these centres.

The existing libraries in Cape Town and Pretoria are State institutions and could without much difficulty be converted into the required regional libraries, some of the social, civic and ethical material and the technical staff would need to be supplied; the Johannesburg and Durban libraries being entirely dependent on Local Government funds could also be brought under the control of the Union or Provincial Department of

Education, the Johannesburg library which contains a large collection of technical literature—the Seymour library—would require a considerable supplement, and the Durban library would require very large accessions of technical and industrial material; finally the Port Elizabeth library being dependent on the subscribers only, could not be utilized primarily for industrial purposes, and the establishment of a separate regional library would be necessary.

The co-operation or utilization of institutions founded and needed now and in the future, for sectional purposes, even if obtainable, would introduce a diversity of opinion, effort and tendencies conflicting with national economic objectives, impairing unity of action and efficiency, and in some cases leading, as shown in the Cape Administrator's circular, to funds provided for national education being diverted to other services.

For the efficient operating of an industrial library service, not only must all the subjects be fully covered in detail, but the staff must be conversant with many subjects and technically competent to guide enquirers. They should not be merely custodians of books but custodians of information, and should have the ability and the zeal necessary for extending the use of the service to every part of the country. Both willing service, competent guidance and expeditious transport arrangements are essential for economic success.

LIBRARY NOTES AND NEWS

Hermanus. Public Library. Revenue in 1941 was £438. 11s. 6d., an increase of £55. Membership is 324, an increase of 46. 462 books were purchased, bringing the total to 7,092. Issues during the year numbered 22,046—a record for the library. (*Cape times*, 16. Feb. 1942)

Indian Library Exhibition. At the 5th All-India Library Conference to be held in April, 1942, an exhibition is to be held of library literature, including books, pamphlets, journals, survey reports, bulletins, handbooks, catalogues, publicity posters, library plans, latest equipment and supplies. Material is to be exhibited from various countries, including South Africa.

Rose Innes Library. The Library of the Diocesan College, Rondebosch, will benefit under the will of Sir James Rose Innes which has been filed with the Master of the Supreme Court. After making certain family settlements the will directs Lady Innes to present to the Diocesan College a collection of Sir James' books suitable for the College Library. It adds that he particularly had in view books of an historical nature. Books which she considers suitable are also to be presented by Lady Innes to the Marion Institute and/or the Liberman Institute. Sir James bequeathes his letters, documents, and uncompleted "Recollections" to his wife to deal with as she may decide. (*Cape times*, 13. Feb. 1942)

Victoria West. Public Library. The committee of the library has written to the Cape Times saying that a movement is afoot there to reorganize and re-stock the library. The committee would like a "list of 100 modern books" which their library should have as the foundation of its new lease of life. Perhaps readers of the Cape Times will help by sending in to this office lists of modern books they deem indispensable. (*Cape times*, 21. Feb. 1942)

Woodstock. The Minister of the Interior, Mr. H. G. Lawrence, was the speaker at the annual meeting in February. The annual report stated that the Library was in a flourishing position. Membership is 462, as compared with 369 the preceding year. There was a considerable increase in the demand for non-fiction. The Library has a total of 14,298 books of which 2,442 belong to the non-fiction class. (*Cape times*, 13. Feb. 1942)

Wynberg. Public Library. From the *Annual report* :—

Membership ; 1,057, an increase of 160

Stock ; 14,779 (Fiction 7,475, non-fiction 7,304)

Issues ; 73, 734 (Fiction 57,225, non-fiction 11,207, juvenile 5,302)

2,015 reservations were made during the year. The system of obtaining additional volumes by paying 3d. per volume continues to be popular, 11,788 such issues being made during the year.

Displays were arranged from time to time throughout the year. Books were re-circulated by this means as follows :—

Biography 610 ; "Africa speaks" 282 ;
 "Men worth knowing" 91 ; Western 606 ;
 "As interesting as a novel" 100 ; Patriotism 96 ;
 "Spring" (arranged by students of the University of Cape Town) 307.

A Juvenile Correspondence Club is now in operation between members of this and other libraries in the Peninsula and Hastings Library, Nebraska, U.S.A. . . . The amount received from the collection box placed in the Library for the purchase of discarded library books for the troops was £9. 8s. 5d. Articles made by a member of the staff and sold for the Books for the Troops Fund realized £11.

Indiana Library Certification Law. *Library Occurrent*, 13 : 347-49, Oct.-Dec. 1941, reprints from the *Laws of the State of Indiana for 1941, An Act creating the Indiana Library Certification Board, prescribing its rights, powers and duties, and providing for the certification of librarians.* We quote the following as being of contemporary interest here :—

Duties. The Library Certification Board is hereby authorized and required : (1) To prescribe and define grades of public library service and to prescribe the qualifications which persons shall possess who are employed in each of such grades of public library service, giving due consideration to the population served, the income and the salary schedule of each library ; . . . (3) To examine candidates who apply for certificates qualifying them to secure employment in any designated grade or grades of public library service, and to issue certificates to such candidates as are found to be competent and who are eligible to apply for such examination ; (4) To issue certificates, without examination, to candidates who apply therefor, and who, by reason of their academic or technical training, and/or experience are found to be fit and suitable persons to certify ;

(5) To prescribe and define what shall constitute a head librarian, and a head of any department or branch or professional assistant of a public library, for the purposes of this act ; and (6) To adopt and promulgate such rules and regulations as the board may deem necessary and proper to carry out and administer the provisions of this act.

Sec. 3. On and after the first day of January, 1942, and except as hereinafter otherwise provided, it shall be unlawful for the board of trustees, school board or any other governing body having the lawful charge of any public library, or any other library, supported in whole or in part by public funds, except school libraries and the libraries of educational institutions, to appoint as the head librarian, or as the head of any department, or branch, or as professional assistant of any such library, any person who does not hold a certificate of a suitable and requisite grade, granted in accordance with the provisions of this act, and the rules and regulations of the Library Certification Board issued thereunder.

Rhodesian Archives destroyed. In May, 1941, the London offices of the British South Africa Company were destroyed by incendiary bomb fire. The offices contained a large part of the records of the B.S.A.'s administration of Rhodesia, and with their destruction invaluable material relating to the early history of the Colony has been lost. This loss was the subject of a motion by Mr. Leggate in the House of Assembly of Southern Rhodesia "that the House records its deep regret at the loss of the greater part of the Archives of the Colony due to the negligence of the British South Africa Company in not affording them the protection which it promised". The history of the negotiations between the Government of Southern Rhodesia and the B.S.A. for the transfer of the documents to the Rhodesian Archives formed the subject of a lengthy speech by Mr. Leggate. The motion was amended by the deletion of the words "due to the negligence of the British South Africa Company in not affording them the protection which it promised" and carried. (Southern Rhodesia. Debates of the Legislative Assembly, v. 21, no. 41, Wednesday, 2. July, 1941).

Importation of Books, Periodicals, etc. Extract from Government Notice, no. 1636, *Government Gazette*, no. 2961, 14. November, 1941 : "... goods mentioned in the Annexure to this notice to be exempted from the provisions of the above-mentioned Government Notices [No. 1267 of 10. September, 1941, as amended by Government Notice No. 1387 of 3. October, 1941]... Annexure . . . 3. Printed books, catalogues, periodicals, newspapers and advertising matter."

BOOK REVIEWS

SUID-AFRIKAANSE KATALOGUS VAN BOEKE, volledige uitg. : boeke uitg. 1900-1939
 SOUTH AFRICAN CATALOGUE OF BOOKS, complete ed. : books published 1900-1939 ;
 with a list of publishers & booksellers in S. Africa.

Redakteur : Nico S. Coetzee, etc., Stellenbosch : Box 25, 1941. 257 p. £3. 0s. 0d.

The annual cumulation of Mr. Coetzee's *South African Catalogue of books* has already been reviewed in these pages (*S.A.L.*, 7 : 166, April, 1940). Mr. Coetzee and his collaborators have now set themselves a far more ambitious task : the compilation of a cumulative list of South African publications from 1900-1939. It should be said at once that their diligence has resulted in a volume which, in spite of its limitations (and they are not few in number), is bound to be of very considerable use not only to publishers and booksellers, but also to all librarians and collectors of Africanana. No-one with experience of South African publications, and knowing the vagaries and imperfections of such bibliographical information as does exist, will fail to appreciate the difficulties of their task, or the energy with which they have tackled them.

A list of such importance, however, deserves an attentive review. The writer of one of the book's five prefaces remarks that a comprehensive list of this character might be expected to have been compiled by a government institution or by one of the more important libraries or universities of South Africa which have more assistants at their disposal (than Mr. Coetzee). Libraries of this character, however, are not likely to occupy themselves with the compilation of a work which does not claim to be more than a 'reference catalogue', or publishers' list ; their concern is—or should be—with a bibliographically accurate record of even more ambitious dimensions, and several of them are already working on these lines. It would not be fair to judge the present volume as more than an essay in bibliography, and one designed rather for utilitarian purposes of quick reference than for any particular technical virtues.

But even a ready reference list should conform with certain standards of accuracy and completeness, and it is therefore disappointing to discover that the faults referred to in the review of the annual compilation should have been carried over to this more important work. The application of a few simple cataloguing rules would have saved the compilers from a number of errors and inconsistencies, and while it must be admitted that the work was carried out under considerable difficulties, and one must prefer a list with errors to no list at all, it is a pity that it was not vetted before publication by someone who could have set the compilers right. The work will, after all, be sold and read abroad (in accordance with one of its purposes), and as an ambassador for South African books it should be innocent of avoidable faults.

The objects of the Catalogue, as stated by the editor, are (i) to provide a reference catalogue for the book trade and for librarians that gives particulars of books published in South Africa ; (ii) to advertise our books overseas, thereby placing them on the world book market ; and (iii) to show persons that do not yet acknowledge Afrikaans to what extent Afrikaans literature has grown in recent years. These are excellent objects, and imply (rightly) that the list will not be confined to books actually in print. They also imply that the list must not only fill in the many gaps in Mendelssohn's Bibliography for the period 1900-1910, but also record for the first time in print (in South Africa) the output from 1910 until the appearance of the Copyright lists of the State Library, Pretoria, in 1933. The main sources for this period are, of course, the lists issued by the publishers themselves—such as they are—and the catalogues of the larger libraries in the country. It is surprising, therefore, to find no reference in the 'List of consulted works' either to Mendelssohn's Bibliography or even to the Royal Empire Society's Catalogue (volume I), and no evidence that the compilers have consulted the catalogues of the South African Public Library, which has been a Copyright Library since 1888, and contains much material not recorded elsewhere in the country.

As one consequence of these omissions, the entries for the period 1900-33 cannot claim to be anything like complete. A quick comparison with the catalogue of the South African Public Library, for instance, reveals more than 20 omissions in the first few pages of one letter alone, and closer research would probably reveal many more. There is, for instance, no mention of Pettman's *Notes on South African place-names*, the *Lewenskets van Jopie Fourie* by C. A. Neethling and J. de Wet, or Lloyd's *List of serial publications*, to mention three books at random, and six of the Van Riebeeck Society's publications are omitted altogether.

The Van Riebeeck Society's publications are a useful test case, for their treatment exposes almost every one of the Catalogue's weaknesses. These publications are easily traceable, since they are listed in each new volume as it is issued. The Catalogue records them as follows :

- v. 1. De Chavonnes is not mentioned as being o.p. Van Imhoff is recorded as Von Imhoff, and is given no separate entry.
- v. 2. Mentzel. *Life at the Cape*. Not recorded.
- v. 3. De Mist. No mention of editors, or of its being o.p.

- v. 4. Mentzel. *Geographical description*. Mentzel is given a blank for initial. No mention of Mandelbrote, translator and editor. No mention of v. 2 (V.R.S. no. 6, 1924).
- v. 5. Collectanea. No mention.
- v. 6. See v. 4, above.
- v. 7. Owen's *Diary*. Entered under Cory (editor)—no mention under Owen.
- v. 8. *Wreck of the Grosvenor*. No mention.
- v. 9. *Dagboek van Witbooi*. No mention.
- v. 10. Lichtenstein. Gives the wrong years, misspells name of translator, does not mention v. 2 (V.R.S., v. 11, 1930).
- v. 11. See v. 10, above.
- v. 12. Journals of Bergh & Schrijver. No entry under either of these. Only entry is under translator, Dr. Mossop, whose initial is given wrongly.
- v. 13. Louis Trigardt's trek. Trigardt spelt wrongly. No entry under Fouché, editor.
- v. 14. *Early Cape Hottentots*, by Dapper, Ten Rhyne & Grevenbroek. No entry under last two authors, or under editors. Grevenbroek wrongly spelt.
- v. 15. Journals of Wikar, Jancz and van Reenen. No entry under any of these. The only entry is under Dr. Mossop, editor & translator.
- v. 16. 17. Isaacs' *Travels*. Both volumes are mentioned, but only the second as being edited by Herrman.
- v. 18. Journal of Dirk van Reenen. No mention at all.
- v. 19. *Duminy Dagboeke*. This is the only volume to be entered correctly.
- v. 20. Diary of Sir Andrew Smith. No entry under Kirby, editor.

In addition, the name of the Society is given in various forms in different entries, and prices are not all mentioned (although easily ascertainable). There is no series entry.

This test shows up the following weaknesses :—

Arrangement

The arrangement is a simple dictionary one of authors and titles, the author entry giving the name in *caps*. Joint authors, however, are not given separate entries. For Immelman and Murray's *Volksboekerye*, for instance, Murray has no separate entry. This omission may save space, but does not add to the usefulness of the compilation. There is, for instance, no separate entry under Ballinger, although most people wanting *Indirect rule* would look under Ballinger, and not Hodgson.

The alphabetical arrangement is not always consistent, e.g., two entries under Coetzee among the Coetzee's.

Inconsistent entries

These abound. There seems to be no rule for recording pagination—as *bls.* or *pp*. The Carnegie Visitors' reports are entered as Carnegie Vis. Rep., Carnegie Reports, and so on.

Mistakes and misprints

These are far too numerous. Sometimes they lead to entries being completely lost, as, for instance, when E. A. Walker's *South African College* is entered under Walter, and separated from his other publications. The pamphlets by Hodgson and Ballinger (referred to above) have two entries—one under Hidgson, and one under Hodgson. It would be wearisome to list more of these avoidable errors.

There are at the beginning and end of the volume respectively lists of publishers and booksellers in South Africa, and of the principal newspapers and periodicals published here. It is a little disturbing to find (on chance reference) one firm of booksellers mentioned at the address they left more than four years ago, but on the whole the lists (bar the inevitable misprints) seem to be fairly accurate.

Finally, it should be emphasized that the compilers of this work hope to publish a more complete edition in the future, and invite the co-operation of all those interested in supplying particulars of books and publishers not mentioned in the first edition. It is to be hoped that in this way the mistakes and omissions of the trial edition will be remedied in the second, and the compilation made really worthy of its subject. The resources of the South African Public Library have already been offered to the compilers with this aim in view.

It should be possible, furthermore, to publish a second edition at a less forbidding price than £3, particularly when its true value as a reference tool is realized by booksellers and librarians not only in South Africa but also overseas.

D. H. V.

U.S. FEDERAL WORKS AGENCY. WORKS PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION. *Illinois. District no. 3*. The Chicago Public Library omnibus project, engaged in the production of library reference tools. Chicago : W.P.A. Illinois, District no. 3, 1400 West Washington Boulevard. 1940. 45 p. *Mimeographed*.

In view of the fact that the South African Library Association has recently appointed a committee to report on bibliographical projects in this country, this little booklet is of immediate interest. The "omnibus project" includes the compilation of (a) indexes, (b) bibliographies, and (c) catalogues. The project is being carried out with the help of government-supported workers, on a scale which would be prohibitive as a private enterprise. Although we cannot, therefore, attempt to imitate, we can at least get a line on what is being done.

Among the indexes are those of (i) the Metropolitan press; (ii) Congressional debates; (iii) foreign language press. Under (i) one newspaper is being indexed for each year from 1833 to 1937. Different papers are selected for different periods, the selection being determined by availability and the adequacy of the news reporting. One volume will be prepared for each year, in typewritten form; the volumes will then be microfilmed and prints made available to any institution wanting them.

The index to Congressional debates will be a cumulative one from 1789 to date, and will contain more detailed entries than the existing indexes to the annual volumes. It is proposed to prepare not less than 250 mimeographed copies of the index for distribution.

The foreign language press project will include translations, as well as index entries, of important news items in Chicago newspapers in foreign languages.

The bibliographies to be compiled include The History of Printing, Illinois Writers, Foreign Language Newspapers and Periodicals published in Chicago, and Mid-Western Explorations and Settlements. Each aims at probing hitherto unexploited sources for minor material, as well as existing bibliographical works. The Mid-Western bibliography will include all aspects of Mid-Western settlement: early explorations, natural forces facing the settlers, first territorial governments, family life on the prairies, transportation, and so on. This bibliography will apparently be available only on cards at headquarters, but that of Illinois authors is to be mimeographed and widely distributed.

The Cataloguing projects comprise union catalogues of material available in Chicago in seven subject fields: Art, the Negro, Law, Economic Theory and History, Jewish Literature, Rare Books prior to 1800, and Greenland. The catalogues will include main entry only. Method of distribution, as in the case of indexes and bibliographies, will vary.

E.H.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES AND NEWS

Books Britain's Best Export. Mr. Brendan Bracken, Minister of Information, advocated book exports as effective propaganda for Britain when he spoke at a lunch given by the National Book Council in London. Good English books, he said, were more effective than most of the lecturers "let loose" in the United States. Books were our best export. "We know what is in books, but you can never tell what some lecturer may say" he explained. (*Pretoria news*, 21. Jan. 1942)

British printer, 54, no. 320:78, Sept. 1941, contains a note: *Bits of lead in a row: negro sixty years a printer*, which refers to James Ntshona at Lovedale.

Paper Shortage. Drastic control of paper in the Union is gazetted in the *Government gazette*, no. 3006, 19. Feb. 1942. The restrictions require that newspapers and news-bulletins shall reduce their paper to 40% of the total weight used for the twelve months preceding 1st. August 1939, and periodicals and magazines by 25%. Newspapers consisting of not more than 4 pages measuring 25 inches by 20 inches, or the equivalent thereof, and periodicals and magazines using less than 1,000 lb. weight of paper per annum are exempt from the reduction. (*S.A.L.* fulfils this requirement for exemption.—Ed.) No new newspaper or periodical may be published.

South African Libraries in the Overseas Press. *The Library assistant*, 34: 184-86, Dec. 1941, contains a short survey of South African libraries by Mr. Norman Tomlinson, who paid a short visit here, and is now serving with the Forces in the Near East. The work of the State Library, and service to smaller libraries and country members in the various provinces, Non-European libraries, and the subscription system are touched upon.

The Library world, 44: 58, Nov. 1941, has a short note on the Children's Book Week in Cape Town last July.

The War in Books is a useful list by H. G. T. Christopher in *The Library world*, 44: 20-23, 45-47, 60-62, Aug./Sept., Oct., Nov., 1941.

LIBRARIES AND THE COLOURED PEOPLE IN CAPE TOWN

Readers of the *Observations* by Messrs. Warley and Holdsworth (*S.A.L.* 9 : 41-44, Oct. 1941) will be interested to know that practical action has been taken to improve facilities for the Coloured People of Cape Town (among others) and that a Committee is now actively organizing an Extension Service to reach hitherto unserved areas.

This body has now constituted itself the Cape Libraries Extension Association. Its members are representatives of the South African Public Library, the Cape Branch of the S.A. Library Association, the Hyman Liberman Institute, the Rotary Club, the University of Cape Town, and the Joint Council of Europeans and Bantu. The chairman is Mr. D. H. Varley, and the Hon. Secretary is—for the time being—Professor W. H. Hutt.

The aims of the Association are : to organize and administer a library service primarily for poorer members of the population not at present served with library facilities, and (as an integral part of the scheme) to re-organize the Library of the Liberman Institute as a Headquarters Reading Room.

The Association have the following resources in hand, besides the £85 p.a. hitherto provided by the Liberman Institute for the maintenance of its Library : a grant of £200 from the City Council, £25 from Mr. R. S. Brooke, a member of Rotary ; and £700, the unspent balance of funds provided in 1930 by the Carnegie Corporation of New York for the purchase of books, and transferred to the Liberman Institute in 1934 by the Cape Carnegie Coloured Committee, which dissolved in that year.

A contract has been entered into between the Association and the Liberman Institute, by which the organizing librarian appointed by the Association will spend five hours daily at the Institute, and three hours daily at the South African Public Library, under the supervision of the Librarian. The circulating box system formerly administered from the Institute will be run from the S.A.P.L. and one half of the Carnegie book grant will be spent on books to be used in the Institute Library.

It is hoped to supply stocks of books on contract not only to schools in the Peninsula, but to libraries at the Bloemhof Community Centre and at Athlone, where the City Council has granted the use of a cottage for library purposes. An application has been made to the Provincial Administration for a grant of £200 to enable the Association to serve areas outside the Municipality, but no reply has yet been received to this request.

The Association is now advertising for an organizing librarian (Coloured) on whom the success of the scheme will largely depend. The initial salary will be £120 p.a., and previous library or teaching experience will be considered a recommendation.

Any further inquiries about the work of the Association should be addressed to the Secretary, Cape Libraries Extension Scheme, c.o. The South African Public Library, Cape Town.

D. H. V.

THE NON-EUROPEAN IN PRINT

Exhibition at the Hyman Liberman Institute

This exhibition was held at the Institute from 1. to 14. December, 1941, and was officially opened by Mr. D. H. Varley. The following is taken from *The Sun*, 5. Dec. 1941 :—

"The Warden of the Institute, Professor Edward Batson, congratulated the organizer, Mr. C. Ziervogel, and said that the display should prove a stimulus to the Coloured reading public. In order that credit should go to the correct person the Professor wished to point out that the exhibition was a "Ziervogel effort", and not one arranged by the Committee of the Liberman Institute.

"Mr. Varley said that three sections in particular gave grounds for encouragement among the Non-European community. The first was the fine work done by the African in America, where the Negro community of 12 millions had produced literary work in every way comparable to the European . . . The second was the increasing volume of literature being produced by and for the Bantu in South Africa . . . The third section of particular interest to Cape Town was that contributed by the Coloured people of the Cape. That it was as yet small in bulk was due to many causes, one of which was the lack of facilities yet existing among the Coloured community for the reading of books."

THE STATE LIBRARY CENTRAL LIBRARY CATALOGUE

Librarians who are so kindly co-operating in the work of compiling the union catalogue will be interested to hear something of its progress from time to time. Although it is only two months since the official starting day, 15. October, the catalogue now comprises over 15,000 entries without duplicates.

The progress recorded to date is considered more than satisfactory, the future of the catalogue is assured and it will not be a very long time before we have reached the 100,000 mark. That the catalogue will prove a most useful and ever more valuable national tool as the years pass is self-evident.

The field is almost infinite, for apart from the comparatively few larger libraries there are innumerable small libraries, all of which will eventually be included. For there are few libraries however small which do not possess some valuable and even scarce books.

As was anticipated, from the experience of British union catalogue compilers, the number of duplicate entries received has been almost negligible.

Co-operators are reminded that the State Library will always be glad to refund postage or railage on request. Fifty cards in an open envelope, fastened with a metal fastener, travel through the post for 1½d.

The Board of Trustees desires to express its deep sense of gratitude to all co-operating librarians for their unselfish and public spirited help, and to wish them all a Happy Christmas and New Year.

Pretoria, 15. December, 1941.

M. M. STIRLING.

MODERN LIBRARIAN IN THE MAKING

"Hark and mark", they said to me
 "Student of the library,
 Library work is now an Art"—
 This was only at the start.
 They told me that the library
 Was part of Sociology ;
 They told me how to prove it so
 And started my *Ballard* of woe.
 They said a knowledge of a few
 Score hundred reference books
and true
 Was quite essential to be great—
 So five-by-threes became my fate.
 They said no one would ever see
 My name within the D.N.B.
 Without a brain-restoring trudge
 Through *Cowley*, *Haines*, and
Grandma Mudge

They said my life was worth a curse
 Without *Sharp* (1. or 2.) or worse
 The hundred odd collected themes
 Of L.A.s' rosy-clouded dreams.
 They said before I could retreat
 The big bad *Wolf* I'd surely meet ;
 Each day with *Dewey* kisses brought
 A rain of decimals to sort.
 The great reward of all my strife
 The be-all and end-all of life
 Would come they said when all should see
 My finished bibliography.
 And having progressed through this vale
 Of learning, *Wellard* and *Esdaile*
 I join the Ulysses who cries
 "Though much is taken much abides",
 But add, if it be not remiss,
 "Far better ignorance than *Bliss*."

JABBERWOK.

SOUTH AFRICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

EXAMINATION RESULTS, DECEMBER, 1941

ELEMENTARY EXAMINATION

Afrikaans Literature (B)

Wilhelmina Baker, Germiston Public Library
Mary Doyle, Boksburg Public Library
Pamela Fincham, State Library, Pretoria
Janina Gonski, Johannesburg Public Library
Natalie Field Leigh, Johannesburg Public Library
Olga Hilary McDonald, Johannesburg Public Library
Florrie Nottes, Johannesburg Public Library
Freda Sandig, Johannesburg Public Library
Bessie Tinker, Johannesburg Public Library
Mabel Audrey Ward, Witwatersrand University Library

English Literature (A)

Wilhelmina Baker, Germiston Public Library
Renée Cassel, Johannesburg Public Library
Daphne Furze, Johannesburg Public Library
Stella Elizabeth Innes, Johannesburg Public Library
Karlton C. Johnson, Johannesburg Public Library
Bessie Tinker, Johannesburg Public Library
Margaret Beatrice Trobridge, Johannesburg Public Library

Classification, Cataloguing and Routine

Sheila Alexander, Johannesburg Public Library
Wilhelmina Baker, Germiston Public Library
Lorna Barnett, Johannesburg Public Library
Norah Cranmer Byng, Johannesburg Public Library
Renée Cassel, Johannesburg Public Library
Margaret Ruth Colman, Witwatersrand University Library
Georgina de Cuevas, S.A. Institute for Medical Research
Thelma Mary Doran, Johannesburg Public Library
Gladys Jean Dougherty, Witwatersrand University Library
Pamela Elliott, Witwatersrand University Library
Winifred Kathleen Evenden, Durban City Library
Pamela Fincham, State Library, Pretoria
Suzanne Findlay, Witwatersrand University Library
Daphne Furze, Johannesburg Public Library
Janina Gonski, Johannesburg Public Library
Patricia Mary Kichenside, Durban City Library
Sheila Elizabeth Lester, Grahamstown Public Library
Olga Hilary McDonald, Johannesburg Public Library

Alice Iris Mathew, Johannesburg Public Library
Patricia Grace Parnell, Witwatersrand University Library
Anette Rabinowitz, Johannesburg Public Library
Freda Sandig, Johannesburg Public Library
Lily Stein, Johannesburg Public Library
Julia Christina te Groen, State Library, Pretoria
Mabel Audrey Ward, Witwatersrand University Library

WHOLE ELEMENTARY EXAMINATION

The following have now completed the whole Elementary Examination :—

Wilhelmina Baker, Germiston Public Library
Mary Doyle, Boksburg Public Library
Natalie Field Leigh, Johannesburg Public Library
Bessie Tinker, Johannesburg Public Library

INTERMEDIATE EXAMINATION

Classification

Erica Else Botha, The State Library, Pretoria
Iris Mary Jackson, Johannesburg Public Library

Cataloguing

Fay Gale Friedgut, Johannesburg Public Library
Agnes Mary Gentles, Cape Town University Library
Betty Jenny Harris, Johannesburg Public Library
Hester Jacoba Odendaal, Stellenbosch University Library

WHOLE INTERMEDIATE EXAMINATION

The following have now completed the whole Intermediate Examination :—

Agnes Mary Gentles, Cape Town University Library
Betty Jenny Harris, Johannesburg Public Library

FINAL EXAMINATION

Advanced Administration

Meredith Mary Barrett, Bethlehem Public Library
Sibyl Nicholson, Natal University College Library

English Literary History

Maris Stella Bradshaw, S.A. Public Library, Cape Town

FRENCH LANGUAGE TEST

Meredith Mary Barrett, Bethlehem Public Library
Georgina de Cuevas, S.A. Institute for Medical Research
Anna Barbara Reitz, The State Library, Pretoria

GERMAN LANGUAGE TEST

Sibyl Nicholson, Natal University College Library

REPORTS BY EXAMINERS

Final Administration 1941

The papers in this subject showed a definite improvement compared with the previous year. It is very noticeable, however, that candidates write better answers to broad general questions than to specific factual ones, and in many cases are deliberately vague as to details. Candidates show a marked lack of ability to visualize a given situation as stated in a question (e.g. Paper II, questions 2 and 6) and accordingly fail to adapt their knowledge of facts to the stated circumstances, that is, their replies are not realistic enough.

In attacking a problem, candidates should endeavour to arrange their points in logical order, proceed from the general to the specific and to have a connecting thread throughout. Too often a number of disjointed facts are given which lack any motivation whatever.

Candidates tended to over-emphasize the educational function of the public library to exclusion of other aspects, e.g. great stress was laid by candidates on service by public libraries to "students and scholars", but hardly any mention of library service to general readers. Surely in the average South African public library the number of "students and scholars" is small compared with the large body of readers whom the public library cannot afford to neglect.

Candidates should be careful of vague general sweeping statements unless they can cite facts in support thereof. The loose use of terms like "the Council" is to be deprecated, when the Town Council, or even the Council of the S.A.L.A. may have been meant.

PAPER I

Question 3. This question was obviously misunderstood by candidates. No mention was made of the current tendency toward state aid in Great Britain, the United States of America, and the Union. It was not indicated why libraries merit state support, but why the local community should be responsible for determining and organizing library service, and why the state should attempt to make libraries available to all.

Question 5. Poorly done. No mention was made of binding, equipment, supplies, building maintenance, etc. Staff arrangements were too rigid, no idea of staff shifts, of one assistant doing more than one type of work or of various departments being open at certain times only. The proportions of budget allocated for book service were not too good (i.e. on reference books, periodicals, children's books, fiction, binding, etc.).

PAPER II

Questions 1, 2, 3, 6. No satisfactory replies. There was a lack of ability to relate knowledge of a subject to particular circumstances.

Question 2. There was no attempt to mention a specific audience at whom the points are directed, or indicating varying adaptations of certain points according to society or to the community.

Question 3. "In America many libraries have in connection with the reference department a Readers' Adviser." This is not strictly accurate, as in most cases the Readers' Adviser is situated near the main circulation desk or near the busiest point in the library; frequently it is an independent department, but only in exceptional cases does the Readers' Adviser form part of the reference department.

Many complicated devices for assisting readers were mentioned in detail, but ordinary methods such as library guides, charts, diagrams were not included ; no mention was made of directions for using the catalogue, nor of displays or exhibits. More should have been made of the whole subject of service to readers as the central idea, followed by specific details.

Question 4. There was too much emphasis on putting up a library building away from the noise and traffic ; too little of the great importance of having the public library building at the most strategic point, accessible direct from the pavement. The need for space for the expansion of the library was not mentioned, nor was enough made of the pros and cons of spending less on buildings and more on service.

Question 5. Not attempted.

Question 6. The answers were not descriptive enough of the service. No unwilling library committee of laymen would have been convinced of the worthwhileness of the Children's Department.

PAPER III

The best of the three papers.

Question 1. "Under the copyright laws of England, the Empire and *other countries*, it (British Museum) is able to collect a copy of every book, pamphlet, map, sheet of letterpress *ever* printed free of charge and this enables it to represent the world of literature on every subject." Surely such statements should not come from finalists ? No mention of the effects of distance in the case of students wanting to use the British Museum on the one hand and the S.A. Public Library or the State Library on the other. There were not sufficient details of bibliographical work of the British Museum, nor of its importance as a national library, a repository of books.

Question 2. Candidates showed a dismal lack of a thorough knowledge of these two documents which for South African librarians should surely be fundamental ? No mention was made of rural library service, provincial advisory library committees, the journal, the training of librarians, etc.

Question 3. No mention was made of lack of funds and training of librarians for Non-European library service, nor the effect of the different races among Non-Europeans on such service.

Question 5. Vague as to the possible alternative forms of financing and organization of schools systems. No mention was made of the question of central school libraries or of the possible effect of class-room libraries.

Question 6. Not attempted.

R. F. M. IMMELMAN,
G. OPPENHEIM.

Elementary. Part 3. Classification, Cataloguing and Routine

The marks were higher than in previous years. Though the paper was straightforward, it required that candidates had covered the whole syllabus, and with only one exception all questions were answered. All candidates showed a satisfactory grasp of essentials, and many of them a much wider outlook than usual.

In all but three papers the Classification was very well done indeed. Cataloguing was not quite so good, and added entries, index entries and references still give trouble. For the benefit of students from smaller libraries we should like to emphasize once again that though there are varying ways of making catalogue entries which may be logical and intelligent, it is from all points of view most desirable to conform to a uniform style of entry.

Several of the papers received again make a good case for the separation of Routine from Classification and Cataloguing into two separate papers: there are usually some candidates who do sufficiently well in Routine to secure a pass mark on the whole paper, while they cannot be certified by any means as competent to do even elementary classification and cataloguing, and vice versa.

Questions 3 and 4, on the purpose of cataloguing and classification, and short notes on terms, showed that candidates had done the necessary reading well.

Question 5, on the free library, was fairly well done, though too many candidates omitted to mention that it is rate-supported. Most candidates said that a free library demanded not even a deposit, without explaining that most "free" libraries in this country do in fact retain the deposit.

Questions 6 and 7 were well done and require no comment.

In *Question 8* most candidates chose the essay on Library Co-operation and this question was least well done. Ideas about the exact position and relations of the N.C.L. and the Regional System, and even about our own State Library, and the existence and progress of union catalogues are often vague. There is a need for a concise summary of this information, as Elementary students each year seem to have difficulty in abstracting the essence from the available rather scattered literature.

M. SHILLING,
E. HARTMANN.

JUNE EXAMINATIONS, 1942

Closing date for entries. Intending candidates are reminded that "Candidates shall apply to the Secretary for admission to the examinations not later than . . . April 15 . . . A form of entry will be provided and must be returned together with the prescribed fee not later than . . . May 15 . . ." (*Scheme*, par. 7).

Provisional Time-table (subject to alteration)

8. June	9-12	Elementary Afrikaans—Final English I—Language tests (if any)
	2- 5	Elementary English—Final English II
9. June	9-12	Elementary Classification, Cataloguing and Routine
		Intermediate Cataloguing I—Final Administration I
	2- 5	Intermediate Cataloguing II—Final Administration II
10. June	9-12	Intermediate Classification I—Final Administration III
	2- 5	Intermediate Classification II
11. June	9-12	Final Bibliography I
	2- 5	Final Bibliography II

EXAMINATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

Library School for more Advanced Students

At a meeting of the Sub-Committee held on 8. October, 1941, it was reported that no arrangements had yet been made. Principal Raikes again offered facilities at the University of the Witwatersrand for such a fortnight's course, to be held here during the July vacation, 1942. It was recommended that the proposed School be made known through the Cape and Transvaal Branches, and by a notice in *South African Libraries*, inviting members to send in their names at once, stating the dates preferred.

Will intending students please send in their names to Mr. Freer, Hon. Secretary, Examinations Sub-Committee of the S.A.L.A., Library, University of the Witwatersrand, not later than 15. May, 1942.

Revision of Text and Reference Books

At a meeting of the Sub-Committee held on 5. November, 1941, it was recommended that the following titles be added to those listed on page 20-23 of the *Detailed Syllabuses*.

BALLARD, Lloyd Vernor. The public library. Chicago : A.L.A. 1937.	\$0.35
BUTLER, Pierce. An introduction to library science. Univ. of Chicago press. 1933.	\$1.50
CHANCELLOR, John, ed. Helping adults to learn. Chicago : A.L.A.	\$3.00
HALL, Anna Gertrude. The library trustee. Chicago : A.L.A., Trustees section. 1937.	\$2.35
HUMBLE, Marion. Rural America reads. New York : American assoc. for adult education. 1938.	\$1.00
JOECKEL, Carleton B., ed. Current issues in library administration. Univ. of Chicago press. 1939	\$2.00
JOECKEL, Carleton B., and CARNOVSKY, Leon. A metropolitan library in action. Univ. of Chicago press. 1940.	\$3.00
JOHNSON, Alvin. The public library—a people's university. New York : American assoc. for adult education. 1938.	\$1.00
LEARNED, William S. The American public library and the diffusion of knowledge. New York : Brace. 1924.	\$1.50
LIBRARY ASSOCIATION. Small municipal libraries. London : Library association. 1934.	5s.
LOIZEAUX, Marie D. Publicity primer. New York : Wilson. 1939.	\$0.60
LOWE, J.A. Small public library buildings. Chicago : A.L.A. Committee on library architecture and building planning. 1939.	\$1.50
McDIARMID, E. W. The library survey—problems and methods. Chicago : A.L.A. 1940.	\$3.50
MITCHELL, John M. and others. State control and state aid for libraries. Gravesend : Philip. 1937. (Librarian's series of practical manuals).	4s.
MUNTHER, Wilhelm. American librarianship from a European angle. Chicago : A.L.A. 1939.	\$2.00
QUIGLEY, M. and MARCUS, W. E. Portrait of a library. New York : Appleton-Century. 1936.	\$2.00
VITZ, Carl, ed. Current problems in library finance. Chicago : A.L.A. 1933.	\$1.25
WELLARD, James Howard. The public library comes of age. London : Grafton. 1940.	10s.6d.
WILSON, Louis R., and WIGHT, Edward A. County library service in the South. Univ. of Chicago press. 1935.	\$2.00
WILSON, Louis R., ed. Library trends ; papers presented before the Library Institute at Chicago University. Univ. of Chicago press. 1937.	\$2.00
— The role of the library in adult education. Univ. of Chicago press. 1937.	\$2.00

SOUTH AFRICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

*Extracts from Minutes of Proceedings of the Administrative Council**Resolved :—*

That a sub-committee be formed to report on bibliographical projects, members to be Mr. Varley (convener) and Mr. Freer, with power to co-opt.

That publicity should be given by the Council to the need for collecting books primarily for bombed libraries, and that a collecting sub-committee be appointed, consisting of Messrs. Freer, Stirling, Varley and Rooke, with power to co-opt.

That Dr. Eybers and Miss Speight draft an official letter to the Civil Re-employment Board stressing the lack of facilities for purposeful reading among members of the military forces, and the need for adequate provision now, with a view to their rehabilitation after the war.

That the thanks of the Council be conveyed to those who are organizing the Books for the Troops Scheme.

That an Education Sub-committee shall be formed which will meet at least once a year to transact business, and between meetings to transact business by correspondence. This Committee to consist of seven members—three elected by the Cape Branch, three by the Transvaal Branch, and one appointed by the Council.

That the Association's 4th Triennial meeting be held at Durban in October 1942.

Durability of book-binding. That Mr. Kennedy be a Sub-committee with power to carry out the Resolution of the 1940 Triennial Meeting, concerning book-binding.

Advertisements for posts. That as a policy the South African Library Association should always protest to the appointing authority when a library post is offered at too low a salary or with other unsatisfactory conditions, and that members be informed of this policy through *South African Libraries*, and be asked to inform the Hon. Secretary when cases come to their notice. It should be left to the President and Hon. Secretary to decide whether action is warranted. All requests from members for action in this matter should be reported to Council for information.

Library posts in Government service. That the desirability of introducing trained librarians into the public service be brought to the notice of the Public Service Commission, the details of approach being left to the President and Secretary.

Index to South African periodicals. That the Council express to Miss Elliott its deep sense of gratitude for the Herculean work she is so ably performing and its congratulations on the success of the undertaking.

Vacation School for 1942. That the State Library Vacation School for 1942 be again held at Cape Town, or, failing Cape Town, that it be held at Durban, the President and the Hon. Secretary finally to decide.

State Library Board. That the Administrative Council relinquish the privilege of appointing a member of the State Library Board.

That on voting papers members should indicate which items they consider to be of sufficient importance to be reported to members.

“A learned book without an index and full references is like a saw without a handle—a valuable instrument rendered almost unfit for use.” (Aldous Huxley).

“If we believe that people can learn from books (and we wouldn't be librarians if we didn't believe it), what about ourselves? (*Library Journal*, 1. Jan. 1941, p. 23)

SCHOOL & CHILDREN'S LIBRARY SECTION

South African Library Association, Transvaal Branch

Vol. 2

APRIL—1942

No. 4

A CRITICISM OF EDUCATIONAL READING MATERIAL

by

PAT McMAGH

THE school-boy reading public is perhaps the most suspicious, difficult and indiscriminating section of the community to cater for. It is suspicious because it has a rooted aversion to being 'educated'. It is difficult because it demands the speed of modern literature as opposed to the meandering of the 'classics'; yet so much of modern popular writing is unsuitable for adolescent consumption—some of it by virtue of its slipshod construction and much of it by its questionable tone. The school-boy reading public is indiscriminating because as long as there is murder, sabotage and sudden death in all its forms style, plot, and characterization leave it completely unmoved.

There are two basic problems confronting the person who would deal with reading matter for growing youth. The average boy even though he be in his middle teens is not a fluent reader. The competition offered by athletics makes him regard reading as a form of entertainment to be indulged in when the weather is inclement.

Reading to be successful and productive demands besides the mechanics of the process an ability to comprehend the text and both processes suffer through insufficient practice. Reading is a labour which must in the boy's estimation be rewarded by the acquisition of vicarious experience. We are apt to disregard this demand and we try, in school reading, to force-feed him on Dickens (usually abridged), Scott, Robert L. Stevenson and other writers of that calibre; instead of achieving our object of educating him we merely nauseate him and nurture a distaste for reading of anything other than the American comic type.

The classics fail in adolescent experience because the youth demands terseness of speech, speed of action and stimulating narration. Characterization, as such, makes no impression on him. Judged by his standards there is no feat which is impossible, it does not matter to him *how* the result is achieved—the achievement is his chief concern. This failure to understand and appreciate characterization is the missing corner-stone and accounts for his boredom with the accepted classics.

A broad definition of the classics might be that they are period works, comedies of manners, theses of reform, satires or merely rambling historical tales, frequently colloquial in language, excessively longwinded and very rarely touching on the fringes of the boy's experience. So frequently the things that the hero of the classical book fears are not the things which the modern boy fears and we must always keep in mind that the modern youth lives in an era of sudden death which sometimes touches him very closely.

The boy's mental furniture has been acquired in this century and must be upholstered in the lighter fabrics of this era—purple plush will not do. We are faced with the

initial task of breaking down the boy's inherent suspicions. He is interested in the sea, the air, animals, the mysteries of the universe and he often appreciates a love interest. Why not achieve our purpose of making him book-conscious by showing him that the authors of to-day can fulfil his requirements? That they are conversant with his world? There are authors like Richard Haliburton, Van Loon, Peter Flemming, Ella Maillart, Paul de Kruif, Conan Doyle, John Buchan, John Masefield . . . and countless others who write from the modern and interest-awaking angle.

In my plea for the reading of the moderns by school-boys I naturally commend the best of their work. It is difficult to condone the type of detective fiction written by some of the more prolific and less literate of our authors who permit characters to 'locomote fatly across the room'. Neither am I advocating a complete disregard of the classics. Introduce Shakespeare, whose current nick-name of 'Willy Waggleddagger' gives some indication of his popularity in school-boy circles, by reading the tragedies and stressing their murder interest. The fault that we make with Shakespearian teaching is that we always introduce him by prescribing his less intelligible comedies. The average boy has no sense of humour in the wider sense. His humour can be of the swift repartee type on occasion but it is the humour of the team, the broad repetitive humour of early adolescence, the humour of laughing at something rather than with someone. Before launching out into any of the higher realms of literature find out the point where the book to be studied contacts with the boy's experience and build from there.

The familiar argument that reading the classics produces style can be summarily dismissed by studying contemporary journalism. It does not often possess the elements of grammatical propriety let alone style. A style is something which an individual develops because he is language conscious, he does not achieve it by being dragged by the hair of his unwilling head through the dreary abridgements of *Ivanhoe* or *Kidnapped* with which we see fit to equip him.

The whole attitude towards the reading of English in this country requires violent revolution. Year upon year the old familiar reading lists make their appearance in the South African schools. December comes and the pet questions are trotted out, usually questions which it is not within the power of the average boy to answer because he could never deduce the information himself. It has all been injected into him by a teacher who has in turn absorbed it from the work of some literary critic. Judged by our examination standards the boy who has remembered the most of this twice assimilated information is the one who makes the best showing. As a result of this method he may be able to produce a couple of pages of intelligible criticism but if he were confronted by a similar piece of study and asked to deal with it unaided he wouldn't know where to begin. He has learnt nothing.

It is high time that we realized that we are educating the masses in South Africa and not providing the rarified educational atmosphere that typifies the training of a microscopic percentage of the youth of England. Unless our education is practical and utilitarian it is valueless. We must perfect the mechanics of reading, both from the comprehending and the mechanical angles, and then if the boy is interested he will go further of his own accord. Education is a matter of self-discipline and desire to know more, it is not a commodity bought like pills and taken at the point of the sword.

The school teacher and the examiner are both characters travelling in narrow grooves, they have an innate horror of the original. The librarian has no such inhibitions,

his is the wider outlook ; he meets the child on the 'do' plane instead of the 'don't' plane of the teacher, and the professional librarian offers an escape from the formalized routine which we of the teaching profession so fondly imagine to be education, but which might be more aptly described as immunization—producing a negative reaction to interest and the intelligent development of the young mind.

AFRICANA NOTES AND QUERIES

AFRIKAANS IN ARABIC CHARACTERS. *The South African printer and stationer*, 22 : 57, February, 1942, quotes the following interesting communication from Dr. A. Van Selms, who spent some time in South Africa in connexion with the production of the Afrikaans Bible, and who is now in the Dutch East Indies :— "Two years ago a colleague of mine handed me a couple of old booklets. The characters used were Arabic, the kind familiar in the East Indies from Malay inscriptions. However, the phenomenon came to light that while I could read one line, I could not read the next line as Arabic. Obviously, this was an Arabic text provided with an interlinear translation. I thought of all kinds of languages written in Arabic characters—Persian, Hindustani, Urdu, Malay—but got no further, till I suddenly began to see shining through the Arabic colouring what appeared to be a Hollands form of words. Suddenly everything became plain : these little books were Moslem catechisms, compiled in Arabic for the sake of orthodoxy, but provided with a translation in their own language (Afrikaans) for the benefit of the Slameiers (Malays), as the descendants of the Company's slaves at the Cape are called."

AFRIKAANSE TEGNIESE WOORDEBOEK. Die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie het aan Dr. E.C.N. van Hoepen opgedra om 'n aanvang te maak met die samestelling van tegniese woorde-lyste en 'n tegniese woordeboek. Heelwat vordering is gemaak en hy het die hulp van verskil-lende vakmanne. (*Huisgenoot*, 2. Jan. 1942, bl. 3).

PERSONALIA

AUSTEN—Miss I. C. Austen retired recently from the staff of the Krugersdorp Public Library after 19 years service.

IMMELMAN—Mr. R. F. M. Immelman, M.A., B.S., has been elected a Fellow of the (British) Library Association.

KINISHEV—Miss M. Kinishev, B.A., B. COMM., assistant at the University of Cape Town Library, has been elected an Associate of the (British) Library Association.

MCCURDY—Miss U. McCurdy, M.A., F.L.A., Assistant Librarian at Rhodes University College, and formerly Librarian of Kingwilliamstown Public Library, has been appointed Librarian at the Supreme Court, Pretoria.

MEWS—Miss Hazel Mews, M.A., F.L.A., Acting Municipal Reference Librarian, Johannesburg Public Library, has been appointed Librarian, Industrial Development Corporation of South Africa, Escom House, Johannesburg.

NAUDE—Miss F. Naudé, for many years on the staff of the Bloemfontein Public Library, is now Children's Librarian at the Springs Public Library.

BACK NUMBERS OF "SOUTH AFRICAN LIBRARIES"

As our stocks of many of the back numbers of *South African Libraries* are very low or entirely exhausted, the Hon. Editor would be pleased to buy, at 1s. 6d. per copy, any copies no longer wanted by members or past members.

Copies should be sent to The Hon. Editor, *South African Libraries*, University Library, Johannesburg.

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN VACATION SCHOOL FOR TEACHERS

8.-19. December, 1941

A VACATION course for teachers for the study of school library organization, organized by Mr. R. F. M. Immelman under the auspices of the University of Cape Town, and held on the University premises from 8. to 19. December, 1941, drew teachers to the number of 42 from three provinces, 16 from the Orange Free State and Transvaal, and 26 from the Cape Province, places as far afield as Keimoes, Vryburg, Belfast and Trompsburg being represented. Not only was it a University Library project, but since its incipience it had drawn the sympathy of the Education Department of the University and of the Cape Education Department, so much so that the latter conceded special leave to one teacher from any one school for the last week of the school term for the purpose of attending the course. Teachers were granted similar leave in the other provinces, and it was this action on the part of the Education Departments that made the course a practicable project and to which the satisfactory response following its announcement is mainly attributable. The goodwill of the Cape Department of Education was further manifest when Dr. de Vos Malan, Cape Superintendent-General of Education, officially welcomed the school members on the evening of the 8th in the Commerce Theatre of the University, where he gave a resumé of the development of school libraries in the Cape to an audience whose animated and critical response augured well for the success of the fortnight to come.

The object of the course was to provide elementary instruction on all aspects of school library work and to make it as practical as possible. It was thus necessary that the proceedings should not be conducted in a vacuum, as it were, and that the somewhat staid atmosphere of a University library should be somehow converted into an atmosphere more nearly resembling that of a children's library, with the accepted dash of brightness and colour. It was also necessary to exhibit examples of reading matter which one could reasonably expect to find in a school library. And so children's books—a nucleus of a model collection had been formed in the Jagger Library especially for this purpose—children's books in all the gaiety of their paper dust-jackets, from picture books for the tinies to books fit for senior pupils, were displayed alongside suitable works of reference and books of direct interest to the teacher-librarian and a collection of American Newbery and Caldecott prize books kindly lent by the South African Public Library. Library booklists, book selection aids, school series, and pertinent odds and ends were strewn over the reading room with a charmingly affected carelessness; library posters coloured the wall, and a display of the book in successive stages of binding stared from a glass case. The teachers were able to handle and appreciate and/or criticize the books. A special card catalogue in dictionary form of the children's books had been compiled with abbreviated cataloguing and annotations, with subject headings gleaned from the Library of Congress headings and Smith's list for children's libraries, and with classification numbers based on an abridgement of Dewey drawn up by Mr. A. Thompson.

The afternoons were given up to practical work. On three hot afternoons the classes sat imperturbably cataloguing and classifying books; on a fourth they followed demonstrations of routine in the Jagger Library, and on a fifth they were taught how to teach the

use of books by Miss Kinishev and by two of their own members, Miss H. Purwitsky and Mr. M. J. Stiglingh. Tea with Miss E. B. Hawkins, Principal of the Wynberg Girls' High School, took place on the 8th, followed by an inspection of the school library; on the 17th there were further routine demonstrations by Miss Ashenhurst in the Wynberg Public Library; and on the 18th came a visit to the South African Public Library where ways and means of book repairing were exhibited and explained.

Mornings were devoted entirely to lectures, 34 in all, a formidable sequence for the teachers, but rewarding at any rate to the lecturers since to the end attendance never flagged. Certain lectures were duplicated in an effort to make the course as bilingual as possible; they were delivered simultaneously in Afrikaans and in English. The staff of the Jagger Library undertook the lectures on cataloguing, classification, choosing books, library in the school, non-book material, publicity, reference books, the teacher-librarian, and teaching the use of books. For the rest invaluable help was found elsewhere. Miss Taylor of Johannesburg, without whom any course in the Union involving discussion of children and their books seems incomplete, spoke on children's literature in six lectures and on library co-operation in a seventh; Mr. G. V. Marais, Librarian of Stellenbosch University, and Mrs. B. H. Robinow, formerly assistant at the University of Witwatersrand, joined forces to duplicate in Afrikaans and English four lectures on library organization; Miss S. Goldblatt spoke on *Afrikaanse kinderlektuur* and Mr. D. H. Varley on children's reading. Three lectures were contributed by the University Education Department. Professor J. F. Burger's theme was *The educational curriculum and the school library*; Professor W. F. Grant's *The school library and the school laboratory*; and Mr. N. P. van Wyk Louw's *Leesbehoefes*. And to the lot of Professor A. H. Murray fell the duty of pronouncing the valediction.

On the evening of the 10th a joint meeting of the school with the Cape Branch of the South African Library Association in the South African Public Library took the form of a symposium at which Miss Hawkins, Miss Taylor, and Mr. N. J. le Roux, Principal of the Jan van Riebeeck Hoërskool, each spoke briefly on the place of the library in the school.

A lighter interlude was the reception of members at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Immelman, where films and comestible delicacies combined to while away happily the evening of the 12th.

If one dare draw a conclusion after the event it is this: that there is abroad, in responsible quarters and elsewhere, sympathetic feeling for this comparatively new child of ours and also an interest which is real, though somewhat latent, and which awaits further exploitation. Hope is not lost when one can already point to inquiries, somewhat anticipatory, yet exceedingly complimentary about the next course! The course too is to have an offspring. A short manual on school librarianship for teachers in South Africa, edited by R. F. M. Immelman and D. H. Varley, will be in print in the near future, various circumstances having delayed its publication in time for the course.

H. H.

BOOK SELECTION LISTS. *The School library review*, v. 3, no. 3, Christmas term, 1941, contains several useful lists. The *List of art books* comprises a hundred odd titles grouped under Theory, History of Art, Architecture, Sculpture, Painting, Drawing, Other Visual Arts. Twenty-two titles are starred for nucleus purchase.

Then there is a list of thirty *Inexpensive books on music* in well-known series, such as Everyman. Finally there is a useful *List of English classics with selected editions*.

Classification for school libraries. Owing to illness the conclusion to Miss Whiteley's article begun in our October number is held over.

EDITORIAL

It was perhaps ambitious to launch a new society on the sea of so many associations in time of war; and there were those of us, when the School and Children's Library Section was inaugurated some eighteen months ago, who watched the growth of our favourite child with a little anxiety and then later with not inconsiderable pride. For the Section has slowly but surely gained a footing in the library world and—I know that members will agree with me—is fulfilling a real need.

Our membership is not large but it is alive; meetings have been attended by an enthusiastic group of teachers and librarians; and interest has been maintained by speakers, book reviews, and the inspection of different types of school libraries.

The committee is at present working on a simple course of instruction for school librarians which it is hoped to hold at the Normal College, Johannesburg, on Saturday mornings in the near future. Further details will be available very soon.

M. W. SHILLING,
Joint Hon. Secretary.

Skoolbiblioteke in Kaapland. Die Kaapse Provinsiale Biblioteekkomitee het onlangs 'n ondersoek ingestel na skoolboekerye. Sy verslag is nog nie gepubliseer nie, maar *Die Huisgenoot* van 2. Januarie, bl. 3, gee 'n paar voorlopige bevindings. Daar is gemiddeld 5 boeke per leerling, en die geld wat aan boeke bestee word is bevredigend. Maar daar is 'n groot behoefte aan sistematiese boekekeuse, aan doelmatige huisvesting en aan opgeleide bibliotekarisse. Wat eersgenoemde betref, bestaan daar ongelyke verdeling van boeke tussen ouderdomsgroepe, 'n oorweging van die romanklas, en 'n gebrek aan tydskrifte. Verder word aan die hand gegee pat gelde ingesamel word vir die oprigting van aparte geboue vir skoolbiblioteke, en dat lede van die skoolpersoneel wat hulle spesiaal bekwaam vir biblioteekwerk ekstra salaris sal ontvang.

Textbook on School Libraries. Immelman. R. F. M., ed. The school library: a handbook for teacher-librarians, by the teaching staff of the course of library training, University of Cape Town, ed. by R. F. M. Immelman and D. H. Varley. Cape Town: Maskew Miller. *In the press.* 5s.

SOUTH AFRICAN LIBRARIES: REPRINTS

Members are reminded that reprints are available of the *Senate debate on a national library policy* (S.A.L. 9: 45-57, Oct. 1941), and *Library publicity* (S.A.L. 33-40, 87-90, Oct. 1941, Jan. 1942), at 3d. and 6d. respectively. Both reprints should prove useful as propaganda for distribution among committee members and others interested in library progress.

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

VACATION COURSE FOR TEACHERS, DECEMBER 1941

by

F. BUTLER

DURING the fortnight 1.-19. December, 1941, the University of Cape Town offered a library course for teachers, most of whom were inexperienced in library organization. We cannot rate the value of the course too highly. We knew that our aim in a school was not that of a large public library, but needed guidance, which we obtained.

In the first place those whose schools owned only a book-case, if that, were stimulated to increase the number of books that the children needed and to work towards a separate library or at least library room. Secondly they learnt how to work correctly at once without wasting time and money in experiment, while those fortunate to have an established library were encouraged to continue their efforts, were aided with regard to book selection and equipment, in addition to details such as book issue and care.

If we had learnt this and nothing more it would have been useful; but far more important was the fact that our former vague, though probably enthusiastic, ideas were moulded definitely and that all at the end were certain of the necessity of school libraries and prepared to establish them no matter what the difficulties.

We were, however, only a small number of "apostles" who had gained a slight insight into libraries. Let us hope that we shall be at least keen to spread that knowledge and be confident of the worth of what we have gleaned, but at the same time realize that the change we can make is almost negligible in the country. Before any worthwhile school library organization as a whole can take place, the support of the education authorities is essential. If the Departments of Education would back the libraries in continuing courses for teachers, the change in schools would soon be noticeable. As it is, the libraries of even well-established high schools are often no more than poorly-selected collections of ill-assorted books inadequately used. December's vacation course will be a spur to alter this, but by itself is insufficient.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

HAWKES, Arthur J. *The literature of the German War, 1939-: a preliminary classification.* Gravesend: Philip. 1941. 11 p. rectos blank. No price given.

National Central Library. 25th Annual report, 1940-41.

Prominence is given in the report to special war services undertaken by the N.C.L. The Library has organized, in co-operation with the county libraries and the Scottish Central Library for Students, a service for the supply of educational books to men serving in the Army in all parts of the British Isles. A similar service has been given to the R.A.F., and the Library has also been able to assist men in the Royal Navy and the Mercantile Marine through the agency of the Seafarers' Education Service... At the request of the Home Office the Library has organized, with the assistance of the local urban or county libraries concerned a service for the supply of educational books to aliens in internment camps. With the assistance of the British Council the Library has been instrumental in supplying books in their own language to sailors, soldiers, airmen, and civilian refugees from Czechoslovakia, Greece, Holland, Poland, and other Allied countries now in the British Isles.

South African Museum. *Cape Town. Library regulations.* Typescript. (In Afrikaans and English).

Though the Library is primarily for the use of members of the scientific staff of the Museum, regulations are given for its use by duly accredited specialists and students.

Union of South Africa. *Education Department. Library.* List of duplicate copies of publications offered on exchange. List no. 2, 1941. 4 p. Mimeographed.

LIST OF BLUE BOOKS PUBLISHED

DURING APRIL-JANUARY, 1941-42

U.G.	30/1940	South West Africa Report for 1939.	7 0
	51/1940	Report on Road Safety Research	6. 0
	8/1941	Annual Report of the Department of Public Health 1939/40	3. 0
	14/1941	Report of the Registrar of Building Societies for the year 1939	2 0
	17/1941	Report of the Public Service Commission for the year 1940	1. 6
	18/1941	Report of the Irrigation Commission for the year 1939/40.	1. 0
	19/1941	Annual Report of the Central Housing Board, 1940.	2. 6
	21/1941	Report of the Industrial Census 1937/38.	3. 6
	22/1941	Joint Report of the Board of Trade and Industries and the National Marketing Council on Wheat Milling Costs.	1. 0
	23/1941	Supplementary Estimates of Expenditure from Revenue and Loan Fund 1941/42	1. 6
	24/1941	Annual Report of the Railway Board 1940.	3. 0
	25/1941	Report of the National Marketing Council 1939/40.	7. 6
	26/1941	Report of the Government Mining Engineer 1940.	10 6
	27/1941	Report of the Agricultural Census No. 19-1938/39.	4. 0
	28/1941	Census Report Part 6-1936, Religions.	7. 6
	29/1941	Report of the Fuel Research Institute for the year 1940.	2. 6
	30/1941	Report of the National Road Board for the year 1940.	2. 0
	31/1941	Report of the Director of Prisons for the year 1940.	1. 6
	32/1941	Report of the Broadcasting Commission.	2. 0
	33/1941	Report of the Central Road Transportation Board for the year 1940/41.	1. 0
	34/1941	Annual Report of the General Manager of S.A. Railways and Harbours for 1940/41.	7. 6
	35/1941	Report of the Controllor and Auditor General for the year 1940/41.	15. 0
	36/1941	Report of the Public Debt Commissioners for 1940/41.	2. 0
	38/1941	Report of the Wheat Commissioner, 1941.	5. 6
	41/1941	Report of the Controllor and Auditor General on S.A.R. & H. Accounts.	10. 0
	44/1941	Report of the Division of Forestry 1940/41.	1. 0
	48/1941	Report of the Controllor and Auditor General on War Expenses Account, 1940/41.	2. 0
	2/1942	Additional Estimates of Expenditure 1941/42.	2. 6

Publishers and Textbooks. At the request of Government departments, the Publishers' Association has compiled a statement which shows that 15 per cent. of technical, medical and educational books available at the end of 1939 are no longer available, due to war conditions. Titles of technical, medical and educational books remaining in current lists, but of which publishers are out of stock, or which cannot be put into stock immediately to meet active demand owing to production difficulties created by the war in respect of printing, binding and paper, total 5,329.

(*British printer* 44 : 154, Jan., 1942)

Valuable Missionary Papers found. Fresh light on some of the most dramatic and picturesque phases of 19. century exploration in South Africa is now expected as a result of the finding in an old Eastern Province house of a chestful of forgotten family papers. Looking through a collection of documents kept in an old trunk in his home at Tarkastad, Dr. Unwin Moffat came upon a mass of records bearing on his travels in what was then the "Unknown Interior" of his grandfather, the famous missionary, Robert Moffat, who was David Livingstone's father-in-law. At the age of 21 Robert Moffat settled in the Kalahari, and became a well-loved figure among the Bechuana people, for whom he translated the Bible and other books. The new collection covers Robert Moffat's extensive travels up to 1860, 10 years before he returned to Scotland. Among the letters is at least one from David L. Livingstone to John Smith Moffat, one of Robert Moffat's sons. At present the papers are being sorted and examined at Salisbury.

(*Sunday times*, 5. Apl., 1942.)

